

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 5, 2014
Municipal Building Commission Room
151 Martin, Birmingham, Michigan

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Design Review Board (“DRB”) held Wednesday, February 5, 2014. Chairman John Henke called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

Present: Chairman John Henke; Vice Chairman Keith Deyer, Natalia Dukas, Darlene Gehringer

Absent: Board Members Mark Coir, Shelli Weisberg, Michael Willoughby; Student Representative Caroline Stacey

Administration: Sheila Bashiri, City Planner
Carole Salutes, Recording Secretary

The chairman cautioned the petitioners that with only four members present they are short of a full board. Four affirmative votes are needed to pass a motion and that would require a unanimous vote this evening. Petitioners opted to go forward rather than postpone to the next meeting.

02-07-14

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
DRB Minutes of January 15, 2014

Motion by Ms. Dukas
Seconded by Ms. Gehringer to approve the DRB Minutes of January 15, 2014.

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Dukas, Gehringer, Deyer, Henke

Nays: None

Absent: Coir, Weisberg, Willoughby

Motion by Ms. Gehringer
Seconded by Mr. Deyer to move forward first with sign review for Talmer Bank and Trust in case another board member might arrive before Berkshire Hathaway–HWWB Realtors is heard.

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Gehringer, Deyer, Dukas, Henke

Nays: None

Absent: Coir, Weisberg, Willoughby

02-08-14

SIGN REVIEW

479 S. Old Woodward Ave.

Talmer Bank and Trust

Zoning: B-4 Business Residential

Proposal: The applicant proposes to install signage on a one-story, single-tenant building. The building is the former First Place Bank and it has several non-conforming signs that must be removed as a result of the change in ownership. The building has one pole sign and two light box signs with changeable copy. In accordance with Article 1, 1.03, E. Prohibited Sign Types, Billboards, light box signs, pole signs, roof signs, parked vehicle signs and trailer signs are not permitted.

The building also has non-conforming ATM, drive-thru entrance, and parking signs on the sign band of the Hazel and Woodward Ave. elevations which fall under the Parking Signs standards.

The applicant proposes to remove all of the non-conforming signage and install two name letter signs; one on S. Old Woodward Ave. and one on Woodward Ave. The applicant also proposes to retain the two existing 12 in. h x 36 in. w post-mounted "Entrance" signs on Woodward Ave.

Signage: The building is located on S. Old Woodward Ave., Hazel, and Woodward Ave. The total linear building frontage on Old S. Woodward is 45.5 ft., plus an additional 50% of linear footage is allowed for frontage on three streets, which totals 68 ft., permitting 68 sq. ft. of sign area. The proposed **name letter sign** will measure 23.2 sq. ft. per sign for a total area of 46.4 sq. ft. which is in accordance with Article 1.0, section 1.04 (B) of the Birmingham Sign Ordinance, Combined Sign Area that states for all buildings, including multi-tenant, office or retail buildings, the combined area of all types of signs shall not exceed 1 sq. ft. for each linear foot of principal building frontage. The **wall sign** is proposed to be mounted 9 ft. above grade, meeting the requirement of Article 1.0, Table B of the Birmingham Sign Ordinance that mandates wall signs projecting more than 3 in. from the building facade shall not be attached to the outer wall at a height of less than 8 ft. above a public sidewalk and at a height of less than 15 ft. above a public alley.

The proposed signs will be constructed of fabricated aluminum letters and 1.25 aluminum pan faces. Black letters reading "Talmer" will be 2 in. thick and 20 in. in height. White letters on a 20 in. h black aluminum pan reading "Bank And Trust" will be ¼ in. thick. The proposed sign will be flush mounted to the building.

All areas where the existing signs are to be removed must be repaired and painted.

Illumination: No illumination is proposed at this time.

Mr. Larry LaVanway from LaVanway Signs expressed concern about removing the smallest Exit Only directional sign on Hazel. That is an exit only drive and he is worried if there is no signage someone might elect to pull into it. The group concurred that the directional sign could be affixed to a column on the wall at a height of under 8 ft.

Motion by Mr. Deyer

Seconded by Ms. Gehringer to approve the sign review application for 479 S. Old Woodward Ave., Talmer Bank and Trust, as submitted with the proviso that any directional signage could be administratively approved.

There were no comments from the public on the motion at 7:20 p.m.

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Deyer, Gehringer, Dukas, Henke

Nays: None

Absent: Coir, Weisberg, Willoughby

02-09-14

SIGN REVIEW

880 S. Old Woodward Ave.

Berkshire Hathaway-HWWB Realtors

Zoning: B-2B General Business

Proposal: The applicant proposes to replace three existing name letter signs on a two-tenant, two-story building. This application was reviewed at the January 15, 2014 DRB meeting.

The building is White masonry with Kelly Green first-story awnings and muted green panels at the entrance, and above and below the second-story windows. The existing signs have gold lettering on black backgrounds and are somewhat subtle in comparison to the building colors. The proposed signs were divided in

half with white letters on a Cabernet background on the left side, and black letters on a Cream background on the right side. The sign colors are the new corporate colors for the company.

In reviewing the proposal, the DRB considered how the contrasting colors of the signs will work with the existing building colors in accordance with Article 2, 2.02 (c) of the City of Birmingham Sign Ordinance, With only four DRB members present, the DRB could not agree to pass the proposal as presented. The DRB agreed to conditionally approve the sign with cabernet letters on a cream background for the right side and cream letters on a cabernet background for the left side. The applicant was allowed to submit a mock-up sign plan to the Planning Division for administrative approval and if the color changes were not approved, the hearing was to be postponed to the February 5th DRB meeting. The applicant submitted the revised colors but they could not be administratively approved because there wasn't agreement on the colors when they were sent around to board members for approval. Therefore, the applicant is returning to request that the board review the revised sign proposal.

Signage: The applicant proposes to install three wall signs. The total linear building frontage is 185 ft., permitting 185 sq. ft. of sign area. The proposed east elevation sign will be 48 sq. ft. The proposed north and south elevation signs will measure 30 sq. ft. each. The total of proposed signage is 108 sq. ft., In accordance with Article 1.0, section 1.04 (B) of the Birmingham Sign Ordinance, Combined Sign Area - that states for all buildings, including multi-tenant office or retail buildings, the combined area of all types of signs shall not exceed 1 sq. ft. for each linear foot of principal building frontage.

The proposed wall signs will be mounted 10 ft. above grade on the east elevation, and 9 ft. 4 in. above grade on the north and south elevations. This meets the requirement of Article 1.0, Table B of the Birmingham Sign Ordinance that states wall signs that project more than 3 in. from the building facade shall not be attached to the outer wall at a height of less than 8 ft above a public sidewalk.

All of the proposed wall signs will be constructed of 1 ½ in. thick capsule-shaped High Density Urethane with computer carved lettering and an acrylic polyurethane enamel finish. On the left side of the sign, letters reading "Berkshire Hathaway Home Services" will be Cream (PMS 9143) on a Cabernet (PMS 7659) background. On the right side of the sign, letters reading "HWWB, Realtors" will be Cabernet on a Cream background. The proposed signs will be stud-mounted to the wall with 1 ½ in. stand-offs.

Illumination:

The applicant will use the existing black gooseneck lamps.

The Planning Division recommends that the DRB consider the color contrast between the signs and the building.

Mr. Jerry Burke, representing Berkshire Hathaway, said the only thing that has changed with their proposed signage is the color and the name because Warren Buffett has bought out their company. They have submitted the sign that was suggested by Mr. Willoughby at the last meeting.

There was conclusion among board members that the cabernet paint colors submitted were different on the various samples that were provided. Additionally, Mr. Manny Cosenas with Townsend Sign Co. maintained that the Berkshire Hathaway corporate headquarters is extremely specific about what colors and signage can be used. They have approved using the two colors rather than four that was submitted this evening.

Chairman Henke said the board will need the actual PMS sample 7659 in order to make sure whatever is presented is the actual color that will be used. Also, one of the things the board has always encouraged is some raised dimension to the letters as opposed to their being carved out.

Ms. Gehringer noted that at the last meeting the board, as a group, did not choose the two-tone sign. She had suggested the applicant bring in some alternative plans in order to give the board a better idea of available choices. Ms. Bashiri added that once she found out the board would not allow administrative approval, she too recommended to the petitioner that they bring in different options. The sign itself is not so much the problem as how it works with the building they want to place it on.

Ms. Gehringer said the sign on the east side strikes her as very awkward looking against the green. She doesn't think it enhances the building or the neighborhood and to her it looks like a giant band aid. She would like to see an actual board with raised letters and the PMS colors before she would approve the sign. Ms. Dukas noted that temporary signage might work in order to alleviate the grand opening deadline issue.

Chairman Henke suggested to the applicant that for next time they bring in a couple of alternatives that corporate would be compliant with in terms of make up of the sign and color combinations. Ms. Bashiri explained that in the past when it was known there would be new signage, they have approved more than one temporary sign. Chairman Henke further suggested the applicant work with Ms. Bashiri on the temporary signage so they are good for the grand opening.

Motion by Ms. Gehringer

Seconded by Mr. Deyer to postpone the sign review for 880 S. Old Woodward Ave., Berkshire Hathaway-HWWB Realtors.

Motion carried, 4-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Gehringer, Deyer, Dukas, Henke

Nays: None

Absent: Coir, Weisberg, Willoughby

02-10-14

SHORT TERM PROJECTS

2014 Action List

It was agreed that Alleys and Passages could come off the list.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS AND COMMUNICATIONS

A. Staff Reports

-- Administrative Approvals

- 555 S. Old Woodward Ave. - Removal of existing storefront systems and replacement with framing to match that proposed for adjoining commercial space at 555. Insulated glass units are proposed to be clear. Framing finish proposed to be Valspar - Cashmere Pearl.

-- Violation Notices (none)

B. Communications

-- Commissioners' Comments (none)

02-11-14

ADJOURNMENT

No further business being evident, the board motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 p.m.

Sheila Bashiri
City Planner